

A Summary of Rabies in Massachusetts, July to September 2008

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

The following report summarizes data collected on animal specimens sent to the State Laboratory Institute for rabies testing from July to September 2008. Cumulative reports summarizing rabies testing from 1992-2002 and annual reports from 2003 to 2007 are available on the MDPH website at www.state.ma.us/dph/cdc/epii/rabies/rabies.htm.

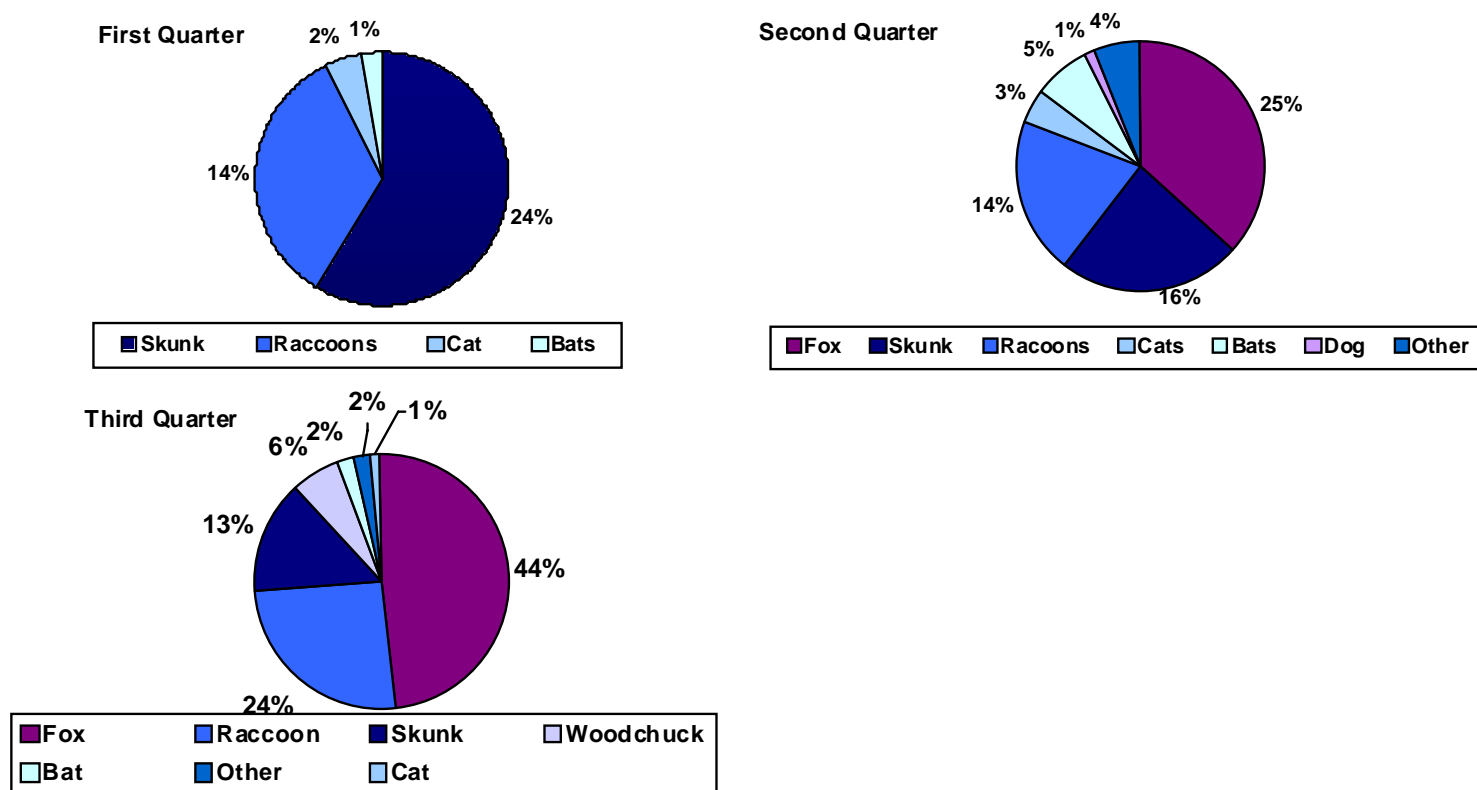
Submissions and Positive Results by Species*

Table 1

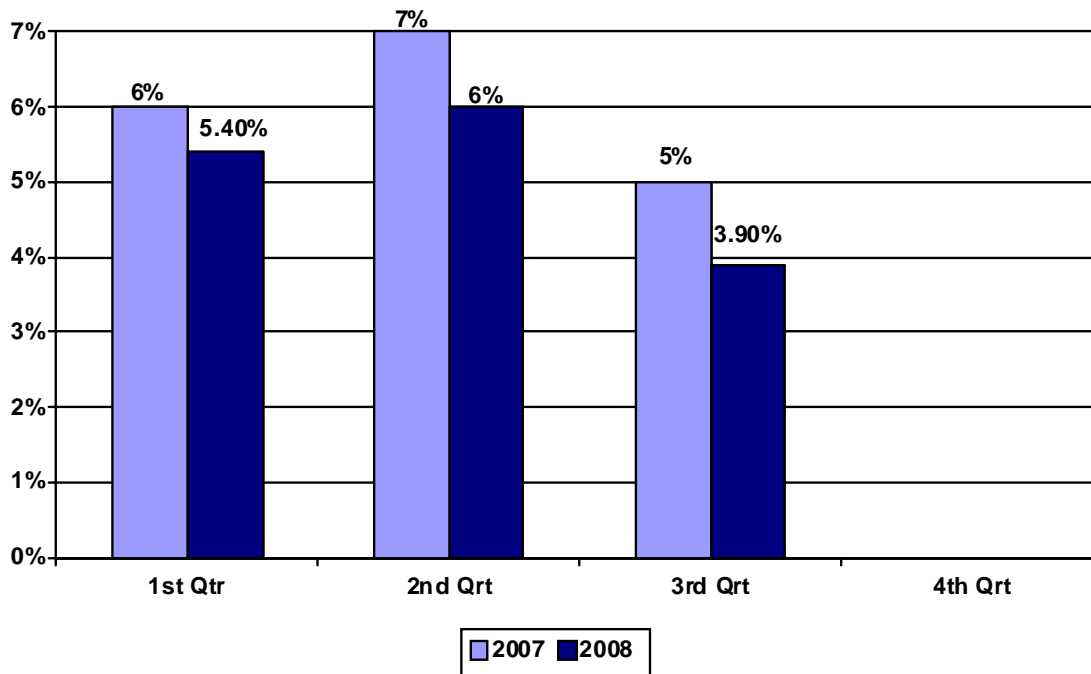
Animal	Number Positive/Submitted (%) 1st Quarter	Number Positive/Submitted (%) 2 nd Quarter	Number Positive/Submitted (%) 3rd Quarter	Number Positive/Submitted (%) 4th Quarter
Raccoon	15/107 (14%)	18/126 (14%)	15/63 (24%)	
Skunk	8/33 (24%)	9/56 (16%)	14/111 (13%)	
Bat	1/56 (2%)	8/152 (5%)	10/478 (2%)	
Cat	2/167 (1%)	8/262 (3%)	3/365 (<1%)	
Fox	0/2 (--)	3/12 (25%)	4/9 (44%)	
Woodchuck	0/2 (--)	0/21 (--)	1/17 (6%)	
Cow	0/2 (--)	0/1 (--)	0/0 (--)	
Coyote	0/3 (--)	0/2 (--)	0/6 (--)	
Dog	0/73 (--)	1/113 (<1%)	0/112 (--)	
Otter	0/0 (--)	0/0 (--)	0/0 (--)	
Other	0/38 (--)	2/55 (4%)	1/59 (2%)	
TOTAL	26/483 (5.4%)	49/800 (6.1%)	48/1220 (3.9%)	

*These are the top ten animals testing positive for rabies in Massachusetts since 1992.

Proportion of Total Rabies Positives by Animal Species, by Quarter



Proportion of Submitted Animals Testing Positive by Quarter and by Year



Cumulative Submissions and Positive Results by Month

Due to the seasonal nature of wild animal activity, changes in animal submission numbers fluctuate fairly predictably throughout the first three quarters of 2008 when compared to 2007. The percentage of animals positive for rabies varies more randomly throughout the year and is often affected by small outbreaks of the virus in geographically localized areas, such as occurred in June 2007 in Worcester County.

Table 2

Month	Number Submitted, 2008	Number Positive, 2008	Number Submitted, 2007	Number Positive, 2007
January	161	6 (4%)	144	6 (4%)
February	132	6 (5%)	144	6 (4%)
March	190	14 (7%)	169	14 (8%)
April	220	23 (11%)	148	--
May	238	11 (5%)	249	9 (4%)
June	342	15 (4%)	345	44 (13%)
July	376	16 (4%)	400	14 (4%)
August	549	15 (3%)	504	18 (4%)
September	295	17 (6%)	256	21 (8%)
Total	2,503	123 (5%)	2359	132 (6%)

Submissions and Positive Results by County

Between July and September 2008, all 14 counties in Massachusetts submitted animals for rabies testing. The highest number of submissions came from Middlesex County, while Berkshire and Hampden counties had the highest proportion of positive animals.

Table 4 Rabies Data by County				
County	Number of Positive/Submitted Animals (%) 1st Quarter	Number of Positive/Submitted Animals (%) 2nd Quarter	Number of Positive/Submitted Animals (%) 3rd Quarter	Number of Positive/Submitted Animals (%) 4th Quarter
Barnstable	2/116 (1.70%)	3/109 (2.75%)	3/139 (2.16%)	
Berkshire	1/8 (12.5%)	0/9 (--)	4/132 (12.50%)	
Bristol	0/29 (--)	2/49 (4.08%)	4/90 (4.44%)	
Dukes	0/1 (--)	0/1 (--)	0/4 (--)	
Essex	0/43 (--)	6/77 (7.79%)	3/132 (2.27%)	
Franklin	1/6 (16.7%)	0/14 (--)	0/18 (--)	
Hampden	2/25 (8.00%)	6/38 (15.79%)	4/47 (8.51%)	
Hampshire	0/9 (--)	6/24 (25%)	1/20 (5.00%)	
Middlesex	3/81 (3.00%)	9/126 (7.14%)	10/249 (4.02%)	
Nantucket	0/0 (--)	0/1 (--)	0/2 (--)	
Norfolk	4/39 (10.3%)	2/87 (2.30%)	4/151 (2.65%)	
Plymouth	5/35 (14.3%)	2/70 (2.86%)	5/83 (6.02%)	
Suffolk	1/26 (3.90%)	5/93 (5.38%)	1/123 (0.81%)	
Worcester	7/59 (11.9%)	8/96 (8.33%)	9/121 (7.44%)	

Number Positive Animals by County, Third Quarter 2008

